

Hill-Physick House
(Hill-Physick-Keith House)
321 So. Fourth Street
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1334

HABS
PA,
SI-PHILA,
30 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY	
PENNSYLVANIA	PHILADELPHIA	PHILADELPHIA	
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME)		HABS NO.	
HILL-PHYSICK HOUSE		PA-1334	
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE			
Hill-Physick-Keith House			
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES)			
321 So. Fourth Street, at SE corner Cypress Street			
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE)		ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
Built 1786, with subsequent additions			
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE)			
A brick Federal house with an exquisite Federal entrance frontispiece. Dr. Philip Syng Physick, father of American surgery, lived in the house from 1815 to 1837.			
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)			
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)			
Red brick Flemish bond. Basement has 8" X 12" ceiling beams on brick piers set approximately 5' on centers. Roof construction in the attic is wooden lath on the inner (con't. on p. 2)			
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)			
48' (three-bay front) X 51'; three-and-a-half stories on raised basement. Center-hall floor plan.			
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE			
The most notable exterior feature is the Federal entrance frontispiece. The large fanlight is particularly noteworthy. Acanthus leaf and fret-band motifs are used on the cornice. A reeded-like band is used between the double doors and the sidelights. (cont'n. on p. 2)			
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)			
Marble fireplaces, mostly white, are notable with their foliate, floral, shell and human-figure motifs. There is one black-and-white veined marble fireplace. Cast-iron firebacks are also notable. Ceiling panels and cornices have elaborate acanthus (con't. on p. 2)			
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES			
1786 section includes an earlier house at its northeast end. The house was enlarged in 1815 by the addition of a one-story wing at its north side. Also in 1850 interior remodeling was undertaken. Other interior remodelings occurred in the 1850s and 1920s. (con't. on p. 2)			
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE			
Since the restoration, the house is used as headquarters of the Society of the Cincinnati of Pennsylvania.			
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE			
A field record folder filed under this house contains additional photographs of the interior.			
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING IN NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.)			
Webster, Richard. <u>Philadelphia Preserved</u> . Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976			
COMPILER, AFFILIATION		DATE	
Wm. B. Bassett, National Park Service, from August 11, 1964 worksheet; edited by Susan McCown, Historic American Buildings Survey, April, 1984			

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (continued from page 1):

side and plaster on the outer side. Floor joists are pegged to main beams, 2' on centers. Section floor joists are spaced 18" on centers.

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (continued from page 1):

The curved railing has arrow-shaped balusters. Light-colored stringcourses are on the front facade.

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (continued from page 1):

leaf motifs. Some of the shouldered architrave doorways have acanthus leaf cornices or paneled soffits. Chairrailing and baseboards are used. The main stairway is curved and handsome with a mahogany railing. Hall floor is made of black-and-white marble squares.

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES (continued from page 1):

Other additions include a ca. 1836 one-story wing and a 1921 elevator shaft. The house was restored in 1965 and 1966 to its 1815 condition from plans by architect George B. Roberts.